

MINUTES
STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD
March 28, 2001

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Vonk
Robin Fortney
Kathy Gourley
Gary Phillips, Chairperson
Timothy Sproul
Lois Tiffany

ADVISORS PRESENT

Diane Ford-Shivvers
Bob McKay

ADVISORS ABSENT

Dorothy Baringer
Rebecca Conard
Jan Nash
Shirley Schermer
Daryl Smith

STAFF PRESENT

Daryl Howell
John Pearson
Steve Pennington
Lyle Asell

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gary Phillips called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

The following adjustments were made to the agenda:

- 13b Bill Johnson will do an update on the seed harvest program.
- 13c Letter of support for a farmland protection application for the Loess Hills.
- 13d Request to do a bird survey at Hayden Prairie.
- Change item number 4 to a decision item.

***Motion was made by Neil Bernstein to approve the agenda as amended.
Seconded by Lois Tiffany. Motion carried unanimously.***

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER

Jeffrey Vonk, Director of the Department of Natural Resources will replace Interim Director Lyle Asell as a member of the State Preserves Advisory Board.

Chairman Phillips introduced Mr. Vonk to the board.

Mr. Vonk said he was looking forward to working with the board.

APPROVE MINUTES

Kathy Gourley said on page 5 in the second paragraph Iowa National Heritage Foundations should read Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and Connie Matel should be Connie Mutel

Motion was made by Robin Fortney to approve the October 20, 2000 minutes as amended. Seconded by Timothy Sproul. Motion carried unanimously.

HIGHWAY 100 PROJECT

Chairman Phillips said at the October 20, 2000 meeting the board received a position statement from the Linn County Conservation Board regarding the Highway 100 project. It was decided at that meeting that the board would prepare and submit a letter in support of the County Conservation Board, which due to the postponement of the January meeting did not get done. Because he had heard that Linn County had been receiving a lot of pressure regarding their decision, he had as chairman of the Preserves Board sent a letter to the Linn County Conservation Board, in which he apologized for not sending them a letter of support and told them that this matter would be put on the March meeting agenda. He asked the Preserves Board to decide whether or not to give Linn County Conservation Board a formal letter of support for their position that is in keeping with the definition of a preserve in the State of Iowa.

Neil Bernstein said the highway would be adjacent to the northwest corner of the Rock Island Preserve, which is where a listed species of butterflies has been found, and would pass a mile and a quarter from Hanging Bog Preserve which is a major conservancy property. Given the way the highway has been developed on the other end of town the development around this new highway could back directly into Hanging Bog Preserve thus impacting two of the State Preserves. He said the Linn County Conservation Board is prepared to go to court to block this project and he requested that a signed letter be sent to the Linn County Conservation Board in support of their position.

Lengthy discussion followed.

Timothy Sproul said a State Preserve is the highest level of protection that we as Iowans can give to a special resource and the Board did not designate this area as a State Preserve for a false purpose. Therefore he supports maintaining The Rock Island Preserve as a state preserve and doing everything possible to make sure that damages are minimized.

Lengthy discussion followed.

Motion was made by Tim Sproul to draft a letter of support from the State Preserve Advisory Board to Linn County Conservation Board. Seconded by Kathy Gourley. Motion carried unanimously.

Gary Phillips said he would draft a letter and submit it via email to all board members for their approval.

Brief discussion followed.

PRESERVES GUIDE

John Pearson said the Preserves Guide is progressing through the early production stages and the anticipated publication date is September of 2001.

SILVER LAKE WATERSHED PROJECT

Gary Phillips said at present time the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) of Osceola and Dickinson counties are applying for grant moneys for a Clean Water Project (319) within the Silver Lake watershed, which includes Silver Lake Fen State Preserve. The project will not involve any land acquisition but will be aimed at land use practice enhancements within the watershed through a variety of federally supported activities including permanent easements on properties and agricultural techniques such as minimum tillage. Currently Silver Lake is an incredibly eutrophic lake that is green perpetually. As part of their grant proposal the SWCD would like to approach the land owners to the east of the Silver Lake Fen and attempt to establish permanent easements, which would prevent development of the property. He said the SWCD would like a letter of support from the Preserves Board. He said anything that SWCD could do to improve the management and use of the private land adjacent to the preserve would probably be beneficial to the preserve.

Brief discussion followed.

Motion was made by Neil Bernstein to write a letter of support to the Soil and Water Conservation District of Osceola and Dickinson counties. Seconded by Robin Fortney. Motion carried unanimously.

Brief discussion followed.

ADMINISTRATIVE RULE CHANGES

Daryl Howell said the Notice of Intended Action that the Board members received in their packets was a draft for them to review and comment on. The changes were primarily an update of the information that was in the administrative rule. He asked the Board members to respond to him with their comments in the next few weeks so that the Board could move forward with the Notice of Intended Action.

Brief discussion followed.

FORT ATKINSON FIELD SCHOOL

Kathy Gourley said there have been 19 people who have expressed interest in attending the Fort Atkinson Field School and everything appears to be moving forward on schedule. She thanked Diane Ford-Shivvers for her coordinating efforts.

GITCHIE MANITOU

Kathy Gourley said the shelter house at Gitchie Manitou has been heavily vandalized in the past and this year the Iowa Historical Preservation Alliance named the Gitchie Manitou shelter house one of the 13 most endangered historic properties in the State. Being named to the list does generate some publicity for the property. She said it had been scheduled to receive a new roof through Restore the Outdoors funding but that funding will not longer be available after this year. If it is not repaired the shelter house will continue to be a target for vandalism. She said the shelter house was constructed by the CCC and is truly one of a kind.

Steve Pennington said the Department is working on getting the Restore the Outdoors program extended past its sunset date of July 1, 2001.

Diane Ford-Shivvers distributed a letter from the Department to Friends of State Parks asking for their support to extend the Restore the Outdoor program.

Brief discussion followed.

LOESS HILLS STUDY

John Pearson said the National Park Service has completed the special resource study for the Loess Hills but it has not yet been published.

Brief discussion followed.

BAYLOR PRAIRIE

Susanne Hickey said the Baylors are interested in putting their farm into the State Preserves system. The property has been in their family since the 1840, and Baylors are very interested in managing the natural areas that they have. The property is located in Fremont County about 2 ½ miles south of Thurman, Iowa. She said what makes this property interesting is that prairie is found not only on the ridge tops but also in a valley. It is known locally as the Baylor Bowl. She said it is quite unusual to find prairie in the valley in the Loess Hills and this is one of only two or three. She became familiar with the Baylor property in 1992 when she was conducting the prairie inventory work for the Nature Conservancy. She was immediately impressed with the Baylor's dedication for conservation. There have been over 150 different species documented as being on the property. It is high quality prairie surrounded by burr oak woodlands. The Baylors have entered into a Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) contract

with the USDA to restore some of the invaded areas of the prairie. The Baylors have over the past ten years encouraged field trips and research on the property and are now looking at what the long term future of their property will be. They want their property to remain in its natural state. One of the options the Baylors are considering is the possibility of putting it into the State Preserves System.

Lengthy discussion followed.

The board decided to plan a tour of the area during a May meeting.

STRATEGIC PLAN ACTION STEPS

Diane Ford-Shivvers said the Preserves Board had finished the draft of the Strategic Action Plan over a year ago but due to budgetary constraints and some unexpected delays it did not get distributed until just recently. Due to these delays she has received some negative feedback. This illustrates the fact that the Preserves System is understaffed and under funded. She handed out comparison of Iowa Preserve Systems to those of other surrounding states, a report by the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) Committee on issues and priorities facing outdoor recreation in Iowa, and the results of a survey by Iowa Department of Natural Resources on participation and opinions about protection. She asked the Board to review them when they had the time. She pointed out that the SCORP Committee listed their general areas of concern including protection, education, and land acquisition. In the list of specific outdoor recreation issues that were identified as needing special attention several of the activities that were listed were things the preserves system is charged with accomplishing. The DNR survey shows the high percentage of Iowans that are interested in preserves. She said according to a survey conducted in the State Parks, the most frequently mentioned activity that park users would most like to be able to do in a destination park was nature trails.

SUPPORT FOR STATE UNIVERSITY HERBARIA

Deb Lewis, Iowa State University Herbarium Curator said there has been a large influx of specimens from surveys being done on our State Preserves at both Iowa State and the University of Iowa. Herbarium funding even in the prosperous years has remained static while costs have escalated. With the budget cuts being imminent she was there to ask for funds from the Preserves Board. She said any amount that the Board feels it can afford to give them would be appreciated. She gave a presentation about the work they do at the herbariums. She said the costs are approximately \$1.25 per specimen in wages alone and one of the more recent surveys being done has generated over 750 specimens.

<i>Motion was made by Neil Bernstein to add herbaria charges as a line item of the proposals. Seconded by Tim Sproul.</i>
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Lengthy discussion followed.

Motion did not pass.

Motion was made by Robin Fortney to set aside \$1,500.00 out of the FY01 budget, to be divided among the three state universities. Seconded by Lois Tiffany.

Lengthy discussion followed

Motion was made by Jeff Vonk to amend the previous motion to support Iowa State University at the amount of \$500.00. Seconded by Kathy Gourley. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion carried unanimously as amended.

SEED HARVEST PROGRAM

Bill Johnson, Wildlife Biologist for the Department of Natural Resources said his proposal is to continue the seed harvest off of five state preserves. To date they have harvested 20 to 30 different species for each of the three ecotype zones. They are hoping to expand it to at least 35 or more. All harvesting will be by hand. The harvested seed is being grown in greenhouses.

Brief discussion followed.

Motion was made by Robin Fortney to approve the proposal as presented. Seconded by Neil Bernstein. Motion carried unanimously.

FARM LAND PROTECTION APPLICATION FOR THE LOESS HILLS

Lyle Asell, Special Assistant to the Director of Natural Resources said the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and the Nature Conservancy have submitted an application to the USDA for farmland protection on five tracks of land, most of which are buffers for different areas including some preserves. This is the first application from the State of Iowa for Farm Land Protection Program and it amounts to somewhere around half a million dollars. Senator Harkin and Governor Vilsack are supporting the effort and he felt it would be appropriate for the State Preserves Advisory Board to write a letter of support for the application.

Motion was made by Tim Sproul to write a letter of support for the farm land protection grant application. Seconded by Robin Fortney. Motion carried unanimously.

BIRD SURVEY AT HAYDEN PRAIRIE

Daryl Howell said he had received a call from Dr. Eileen Kirsch who works for USGS. They are doing a study that compares bird production in reed canary grass dominated areas to bird production in native wet meadow areas. They would like to do a study at Hayden Prairie. He said it is a good opportunity for the Preserves Board to get some good information but the draw back is that the study area will be flagged throughout the summer.

Brief discussion followed.

Motion was made by Lois Tiffany to approve the project. Seconded by Robin Fortney. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPOSAL SELECTION

Gary Phillips said the Board members had been given the following Proposal Score Sheet and scoring criteria and were asked to rate the proposals as high (1), medium (2), or low (3).

Scoring Criteria

1. (10 points) Benefit of the proposed study to state preserves system. Higher scores will be assigned to proposals which provide information pertinent to the management of individual preserves, contribute to solving management problems that affect several preserves, aid in identifying potential preserves, or otherwise yield information which can be used to improve the protection and management of preserves
2. (10 Points) Feasibility of proposed study. Are the goals and objectives of the study clearly stated and achievable? Is the requested funding commensurate with the effort required? Are the personnel qualified to perform the study?
3. (10 Points) Soundness of methodology. Are the methods suited to the goals and objectives? Will the study have unacceptable impacts to the study sites? Are the number, size, and distribution of samples or observations sufficient? Are the analytical methods appropriate?

Proposal Score Sheet for FY 2002

Proposal	Benefit	Feasibility	Methods	Total	Rank
Artz: Geomorphical Contexts of archaeological sites					
Cady: Flora of Cameron Woods					
Cady: Flora of Manikowski					
Cady: Flora of Old State Quarry and Stainbrook					
Debinski: Butterfly inventory of four preserves					
Emerman: Geological investigations in several preserves					
Freese and Brown: Flora of Hanging Bog					
Freese and Brown: Flora of Old State Quarry					
Hazlett: Flora of Mount Talbot Part II					
Heiser: North west Iowa Preserves					
Henry: Algific slope monitoring					
Iowa Valley RC&D: Flora of Old State Quarry and Stainbrook					
Iowa Valley RC&D: Flora of Williams Prairie					

Iowa Valley RC&D: Flora of Marengo-Ladora prairie					
Iowa Valley RC&D: Flora of Hanging Bog					
Iowa Valley RC&D: Flora of Palisades-Dows					
Kessler: Flora of Kish-Ke-Kosh					
Mabry: Flora of Kish-Ke-Kosh and Rolling Thunder					
Moloney: Small mammals and Prairie					
Norris and Farrar: Flora of NE Iowa Preserves					
Olsen: Butterflies of Searryl's Cave					
Rosburg: Floristic Database for preserves and parks					
Whidden: Mammals of Searryl's Cave					

Brief discussion followed regarding the Emerman, Whidden, Rosburg and Artz proposals.

Robin Fortney rated the above proposals as follows:
2,1,1,1,1,3,2,2,1,2,1,2,1,3,2,1,2,1,2,2,2,1,1

Gary Phillips rated the above proposals as follows:
1,3,3,3,1,3,2,3,2,2,1,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,1,3,1,3

Kathy Gourley rated the above proposals as follows:
1,2,1,2,2,3,2,3,2,1,1,3,2,3,3,3,1,2,3,1,3,1,3

Tim Sproul rated the above proposals as follows:
2,2,2,2,3,3,2,2,1,2,1,3,1,3,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,2

Neil Bernstein rated the above proposals as follows:
1,3,2,3,1,3,3,3,3,3,1,3,2,3,3,2,1,1,1,1,2,2,2

The votes were tallied and the preliminary results are as follows:

Henry: Algific slope monitoring

Artz: Geomorphical contexts of archaeological sites

Norris and Farrar: Flora of NE Iowa Preserves

Rosburg: Floristic Database for preserves and parks

Debinski: Butterfly inventory of four preserves

Cady: Flora of Manikowski

Hazlett: Flora of Mount Talbot part II

Kessler: Flora of Kish-Ke-Kosh

Mabry: Flora of Kish-Ke-Kosh and Rolling Thunder

Iowa Valley RC&D: Flora of Williams Prairie

Discussion followed regarding the Kessler and Mabry proposals overlapping.

The final decision was for the following proposals:

Henry: Algific slope monitoring

Artz: Geomorphical contexts of archaeological sites

Norris and Farrar: Flora of NE Iowa Preserves

Rosburg: Floristic Database for preserves and parks

Debinski: Butterfly inventory of four preserves

Cady: Flora of Manikowski

Hazlett: Flora of Mount Talbot part II

Kessler: Flora of Kish-Ke-Kosh
Iowa Valley RC&D: Flora of Williams Prairie
Mabry: Flora of Kish-Ke-Kosh and Rolling Thunder (Partial Funding for Rolling Thunder only) \$1,000
Heiser: Northwest Iowa Preserves (Partial Funding) \$1,200
Whidden: Mammals of Searryl's Cave (if Heiser refuses partial funding)

Discussion followed regarding how the money will be handled if Mabry refuses the \$1,000 then the additional monies will be offered to Heiser.

Motion was made by Neil Bernstein to approve the selection of grants. Seconded by Lois Tiffany. Motion carried unanimously with Jeff Vonk and Lois Tiffany abstaining due to potential conflict of interest.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Robin Fortney said Cathy Mabry had asked her to extend an invitation to the Preserves Board for the Woodland Wildflower Restoration Workshop to be held in Grinnell on April 28.

Daryl Howell handed out a seed harvest report from Kossuth County Conservation Board for the hand harvest of Stinson Prairie.

Diane Ford Shivers handed out the Prairie Rescue Sites for Earthday on the April 21. She said Americorp personnel would be at these sites doing some prairie clearing on public lands.

Diane Ford Shivers said the National Association of Interpreters would be meeting in Des Moines from November 6 through 10.

Kathy Gourley said the Department of Cultural Affairs is developing a strategic plan and she handed out a flyer listing the public meeting sites that will be held in April and May.

Kathy Gourley said the National Loess Hills Scenic Byway dedication ceremony will be held on June 9th in Glenwood and Sioux City.

NEXT MEETING

After discussion the Board decided to meet on the afternoon of May 4th in Harrison County, and the tour would be on Saturday May 5th in the Waubonsie area and the Baylor Farm

BOARD TOUR

The Preserves Advisory Board held a working session during the afternoon of March 27th to discuss the gaps in the preserve system identified in the draft long-range plan.

ADJOURNMENT

***Motion was made by Tim Sproul to adjourn. Seconded by Neil Bernstein.
Motion carried unanimously.***

With no further business to come before the State Preserves Advisory Board, Chairperson Gary Phillips adjourned the meeting at 1:45 p.m., Tuesday, March 26, 2001.

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